

CCC Sea Level Rise Draft Policy Comment

Stoecker Ecological [REDACTED]

[Actions](#)

To:

[CoastalSLRGuidanceDocument](#)

Thursday, December 12, 2013 2:27 PM

You replied on 12/17/2013 11:59 AM.

Dear Coastal Commission,

Thank you for receiving public comment on your Draft Sea-level Rise Policy Guidance ("Guidance"), below:

<http://www.coastal.ca.gov/climate/SLRguidance.html>

We are encouraged to see the development of this Guidance document in order to "provide an overview of best available science on sea-level rise for California and recommended steps for addressing sea-level rise in [CCC] planning and regulatory actions.

The massive amount of sediment trapped behind California's dams and resulting interruption of sediment transport must be prioritized as an essential component of addressing, and finding solutions to, sea-level-rise and protection of our coastal wetlands. For over a century, these dams have deprived, and continue to deprive, coastal and SF Bay wetlands with the essential building blocks they need to survive and grow in the face of rising sea levels. Recent USGS studies show that increasing sediment availability (much of it transported down our watersheds) is one of THE BEST (and only) effective, sustainable, long-term actions we can take to help protect and expand our SF Bay and coastal wetlands in the face of drastic sea level rise predictions.

These USGS studies show that the long-term success of coastal wetland restoration efforts in the SF Bay and beyond are dependent upon adequate, future sediment transport quantities from our watersheds. The imminent decisions being made about the hundreds of antiquated dams blocking millions of cubic yards of formerly coastal wetland bound sediment is crucial to this issue and finding solutions. If the billions of dollars being spent on

current and planned coastal and SF Bay wetland acquisition and restoration in the state become submerged by future sea-level-rise due to this described lack of sediment transport, it would be a catastrophic planning failure. It is becoming increasingly clear, largely through recent USGS studies, that if policies and planning documents do not include restoring sediment transport from our watersheds to the coast, coastal wetland restoration and protection efforts are at risk of failure in the future.

Please consider including language in the Guidance document, that 1) cites recent USGS and other studies outlying the reduction of sediment transport to the coast due to trapping by dams, 2) outlines the inadequate current amount of suspended sediments in the SF Bay to enable coastal wetlands to build up along with predicted sea-level-rise, 3) describing how recent dam removal projects around the country have restored sediment transport to the coast and resulted in expanded and enhanced coastal wetlands, and 4) include policy recommendations that promote the safe removal of unneeded dams to restore sediment transport to the coast as a long-term and sustainable solution to the sea-level-rise crisis. While many of these dams occur well inland, the CCC and Guidance document should acknowledge that these facilities directly and profoundly impact, through the discharge or lack of discharge of sediments, the entire physical characteristics of the coastal zone of the state. CCC policy should include the regulation of these dams, which directly influence coastal subsidence and coastal expansion due to sea-level-rise and will have major implications on successfully implanting strategies moving forward.

Thank you for including and addressing these comments and recommendations in the public record and final Guidance report.

Sincerely,

Matt Stoecker

Owner / Ecologist

[Stoecker Ecological](#)